

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ISO-00 SIL-01 AGR-05 AID-05 CEA-01

CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 CIEP-01

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FM AMEMBASSY OSLO

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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BERN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION GENEVA

USMISSION NATO

USOECD PARIS

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB XG NO

SUBJ: EAST WEST TRADE UNION CONFERENCE

REF: (A) STATE 41440 (B) OSLO 449

SUMMARY: NORWEGIAN TRADE UNION FEDERATION (LO) INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY KAARE SANDEGREN REPORTS LO HAPPY AT SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSION AT GENEVA EAST-WEST TRADE UNION CONFERENCE, ALTHOUGH THEY WOULD HAVE PREFERRED MORE DEFINITE COMMITMENT TO THIRD CONFERENCE TO CONSIDER INDIVIDUAL COUNTRY AND JOINT PROGRESS IN RESOLVING WORK ENVIRONMENT PROBLEMS, AS WELL AS AD HOC EXPERT GROUP TO STUDY PROGRESS AND PREPARE REPORT PRIOR TO THIRD CONFERENCE. SANDEGREN ALSO PROVIDED CONFERENCE DOCUMENTS AND SOME DETAILS AS TO HOW COMMUNIQUE WAS DRAFTED. END SUMMARY

1. NORWEGIAN TRADE UNION FEDERATION (LO) INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY KAARE SANDEGREN EXPRESSED SATISFACTION AT CONFERENCE, ESPECIALLY CONSENSUS AMONG MOST TRADE UNION LEADERS ATTENDING AS TO URGENCY OF WORK ENVIRONMENT PROBLEMS AND NEED TO COORDINATE TRADE UNION EFFORTS TO RESOLVE THEM IN VARIOUS EUROPEAN LANDS. SANDEGREN SAID NORWEGIANS, DUE TO WEST GERMAN DGB OPPOSITION, HAD TO DROP NORDIC PROPOSAL FOR AD HOC GROUP OF EXPERTS TO FOLLOW UP PROGRESS IN IMPROVING WORK ENVIRONMENT IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES AND TO PREPARE REPORT FOR FUTURE CONFERENCE. SANDEGREN STRESSED THAT SUCH AN AD HOC GROUP WOULD IN NO WAY HAVE INVOLVED ANY INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF EAST-WEST TRADE UNION CONTACTS OR ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE, NOR ANY TENDENCY IN THAT DIRECTION BUT MERELY MONITORING OF FOLLOW-UP STEPS. IT ALSO WOULD HAVE BEEN USEFUL IN PROCESS OF "PUTTING RUSSIANS TO TEST" TO GAUGE EXTENT OF THEIR COOPERATION IN IMPROVING WORK ENVIRONMENT AND WORKING CONDITIONS IN USSR AND EASTERN EUROPE. IT WOULD HAVE BEEN LIMITED TO STRICTLY TECHNICAL TRADE UNION MATTERS.

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2. SANDEGREN GAVE LABATT COPIES OF CONFERENCE COMMUNIQUE, DECLARATIONS ON WORK ENVIRONMENT IN GENERAL AND DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES IN PARTICULAR, MORE DETAILED REPORTS TO THE CONFERENCE ON THOSE SUBJECTS FROM FOUR-COUNTRY COMMITTEE, ASPENGREN'S SPEECH AND OTHER PAPERS (WHICH ARE BEING POUCHED TO EUR LABOR ADVISOR GOOTT AND LABOR DEPARTMENT EUROPEAN SPECIALIST HOLMES). HE POINTED OUT HOW ASPENGREN'S SPEECH,

REJECTED SHELEPIN'S CONTENTION THAT WORK ENVIRONMENT PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS WERE DIFFERENT IN "CAPITALIST" AND "SOCIALIST" STATES, ADDING THAT NORWAY CONSIDERS NEITHER NORWAY "CAPITALIST" NOR RUSSIA "SOCIALIST". SANDEGREN SAID COMMITTEE TO DRAFT COMMUNIQUE WAS MADE UP OF SHELEPIN OF USSR, WARNKE OF FDGB, LAPPAS AND KRISTOFFERSEN OF DGB, SEGUY OF CGT, HOUTHOYS OF CSC, BONACCINI OF CGIL (A COMMUNIST) ON BEHALF OF THREE ITALIAN CONFEDERATIONS, BODSTROM AND HIMSELF FROM NORDIC LO'S AND TUC'S MURRAY AS CHAIRMAN. TUC'S HARGREAVES FIRST TRIED OUT A DRAFT BASED ON AN ABANDONED EARLY NORDIC VERSION, BUT FOUND LITTLE ACCEPTANCE FOR IT. MURRAY LATER COMPOSED DRAFT, AFTER REACHING AGREEMENT WITH DGB, WHICH AT FIRST WANTED NO COMMUNIQUE AT ALL, THAT COMMUNIQUE COULD BE STITCHED TOGETHER INCORPORATING PIECES FROM TWO DECLARATIONS. MURRAY'S DRAFT PROPOSED EXPLORING POSSIBILITIES FOR A NEW CONFERENCE DURING 1976. DGB WANTED TO OMIT REFERENCE TO PARTICULAR YEAR. SHELEPIN PROPOSED COMPROMISE "IF POSSIBLE" DURING 1976, WHICH DGB ACCEPTED.

3. MAIN DEBATE WAS ON WORK ENVIRONMENT, WITHOUT REAL CONFRONTATIONS, BUT PERHAPS CREATING CONSENSUS OR MOOD USEFUL FOR PRACTICAL PURSUIT OF SPECIFIC NEEDED INTERNATIONAL MEASURES SUCH AS INTERNATIONAL DATA BANK AND AGREEMENT ON STANDARDIZED LABELING OF DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES. SANDEGREN'S IMPRESSION WAS THAT NORWAY IS AHEAD OF MOST OTHER COUNTRIES IN LEGISLATION AND OTHER ACTION TO IMPROVE THE WORK ENVIRONMENT. SANDEGREN FELT THAT MOST OF PARTICIPANTS WERE INTERESTED IN SEEING WHAT PROGRESS WAS MADE IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES AND IN HOLDING ANOTHER CONFERENCE

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TO DISCUSS THAT. SANDEGREN THOUGHT SUCH FOLLOW UP AND CONFERENCE WOULD PROBABLY EVENTUALLY TAKE PLACE, ALTHOUGH ONE OF "BIG" TRADE UNION CENTERS COULD PREVENT THIS IF IT WANTED. MAJOR OBJECTIVE OF NORWAY AND MANY OTHERS, SANDEGREN EMPHASIZED, IS TO HAVE DISCUSSION ON CONCRET ISSUES, WITHOUT IDEOLOGICAL INTRUSIONS, AND AGREE ON BASIC ATTITUDES AND PRACTICAL STEPS IN PURELY TRADE UNION QUESTIONS.

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